

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A stirring tank for storing a part of a beer yeast slurry discharged from fermentation tanks where beer is fermented, and then returning said part of the beer yeast slurry to the fermentation tanks for reuse, comprising:

a tank body having a substantially cylindrical shape with a bottom portion having an inverted cone shape,

a jacket disposed on a periphery of the tank body within which a cooling medium is circulated so as to cool the beer yeast slurry, and

a stirring impeller made up of vertically oriented surfaces with no main stirring surface that is slanted from vertical, said stirring impeller having a shape and size configured to achieve vertical flow of the beer yeast slurry, and positioned within the tank body of the stirring tank, and having lower paddle blades each including a lower side with a slanting surface to match the inverted cone shape of the bottom portion of the tank body, said stirring impeller being so constructed that the maximum diameter of a rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 60-90% of the inner diameter of the stirring tank, and the height of the rotation body is 70% or more of ~~[[he]]~~ the depth of the beer yeast slurry stored in the stirring tank.

2. (Previously Presented) A stirring tank according to claim 1, wherein the maximum diameter of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 70-90% of the inner diameter of the stirring tank.

3. (Previously Presented) A stirring tank according to claim 1, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the beer yeast slurry.

4.-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A stirring tank according to claim 2, wherein the height of the rotation body defined by the rotation of the stirring impeller is 90-120% of the depth of the beer yeast slurry.

10.-15. (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A stirring tank according to claim 1, wherein the stirring impeller has no hole or opening.

17.-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A stirring tank according to claim 1, wherein the stirring impeller includes a rotational shaft and upper ~~paddles~~ paddle blades, wherein the lower paddle blades are affixed to the rotational shaft and extend from the rotational shaft in opposite directions from each other, wherein the upper paddle blades are affixed to the rotational shaft and extend from the rotational shaft in opposite directions from each other, and wherein the lower paddle blades extend from the rotational shaft at angles offset from the upper paddle blades.

21. (Canceled).

22. (Previously Presented) A stirring tank according to claim 20, wherein portions of the upper paddle blades and portions of the lower paddle blades overlap each other in elevation.

23.-31. (Canceled)